

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



August 23, 2013

DCPS Recycling Program 2013-2014 – New Compost Pilot!

The Department of General Services (DGS) is excited to announce a compost pick up pilot in eleven DCPS schools! The lessons learned from this pilot will help inform the potential roll out of composting in more schools. In the meantime, below are answers to a few common questions about the program.

Why compost? The Healthy Schools Act has set a target diversion rate of 45% by 2015 – by composting DCPS can meet and begin to exceed this target, moving toward the even more ambitious zero waste goals set in the SustainableDC plan.

Which schools are included in the pilot? Cardozo High School, Deal Middle School, Dunbar High School, Janney Elementary, Key Elementary, Mann Elementary, Murch Elementary, Shepherd Elementary, Stoddert Elementary, Walker Jones Education Campus, and Wilson High School. These schools were selected based on their locations to form a commercially viable hauling route; demonstrated commitment to recycling; and modernization schedules.

What is expected from these schools? These schools will lead the way for other schools! The eleven schools will separate compostable waste from their kitchens and cafeterias into supercans provided by DGS – and help provide feedback about what works so that we can improve the program.

What will DCPS compost? Schools will be able to compost all food waste including meat, dairy, bread, vegetable, and fruit products; paper towels and napkins; compostable trays; and greasy or soiled cardboard and other paper products.

What does DGS provide? DGS provides compost pick up services (Tues/Fri), compost supplies such as bins, posters and labels, and support such as guidance information and training.

Does this replace composting in school gardens? No! This pilot program is complementary to composting in school gardens. Schools can choose to compost some food waste on site for educational purposes. This provides great hands-on learning opportunities for students. The pick-up service allows for composting off site of materials better handled by an industrial facility (e.g. meat products).

What about pests? Since the compost is picked up regularly pests are not expected to be any more of a problem than they are at schools which put food waste in their trash dumpsters. As a precaution DGS has considered this pilot in its Integrated Pest Management preventative maintenance scheduling.

How can I get more information? Please contact Beth Gingold, Schools Conservation Coordinator, 202-727-3587 beth.gingold@dc.gov. For more information visit <http://dgs.dc.gov/page/healthy-schools>.